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Security Council

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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in the context of Security Council resolution 1285 (2000) of 13 January 2000 by which the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP) until 15 July 2000. As requested by the Council, I submitted a report on UNMOP on 11 April 2000 (S/2000/305); the present report covers developments since that date.

2. The strength of the Mission remains unchanged, consisting of 27 United Nations military observers (see annex) headed by a Chief Military Observer, Colonel Graeme Williams (New Zealand).

3. UNMOP continues to fulfil its mandate by monitoring the demilitarization of the Prevlaka peninsula and of the neighbouring areas in Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Except when restrictions of movement are imposed by either party, it conducts vehicle, foot and standing patrols. The Mission continues to hold regular meetings with the local authorities in order to strengthen liaison, reduce tension, improve safety and security and promote confidence between the parties. The Chief Military Observer also continues to maintain contact with the authorities in Zagreb and Belgrade in order to address issues arising from the implementation of resolution 1285 (2000). Cooperation between UNMOP and the multinational Stabilization Force (SFOR) is maintained through regular meetings.

II. Situation in the area of responsibility of the Mission

4. Since the submission of my last report on 11 April (S/2000/305), the overall situation in the UNMOP area of responsibility has remained stable and calm.

5. The area of responsibility of UNMOP and the designation of the demilitarized and United Nations-controlled zones remain as previously reported. UNMOP continues to maintain its 24-hour presence at the team site on the Ostra peninsula, at Herceg Novi in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Montenegro) and at the headquarters at Cavtat and the team site at Gruda in Croatia. The Mission has continued to protest about violations of both the demilitarized zone and the United Nations-controlled zone to the authorities in Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including the Republic of Montenegro, in order to encourage greater respect for the security regime governing the zones.

6. During the reporting period, neither Croatia nor the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia put in place a comprehensive demining programme in the UNMOP area of responsibility. As a result, the situation of identified minefields in the area remains unchanged.

Demilitarized zone

7. The demilitarized zone remains calm and stable. In accordance with the security regime, police forces of the parties maintain control of the zone; these are, on the Croatian side, the Special Police and, on the

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Yugoslav side, the Montenegrin Border Police and Special Police.

8. During the reporting period, a significant increase in the number of Montenegrin Special Police was observed in the demilitarized zone, which does not constitute a violation of the United Nations security regime.

9. In June 2000, a Yugoslav Army truck armed with a machine gun and carrying approximately 20 soldiers was observed within the demilitarized zone. UNMOP has protested about this violation to the Yugoslav authorities, who have assured UNMOP that there would be no further such violations.

10. As previously reported, the United Nations military observers continue to enjoy unrestricted freedom of movement on the Yugoslav side of the demilitarized zone. On the Croatian side, the authorities continue to require UNMOP to provide advance written notice before undertaking foot or vehicle patrols in the northern part of the zone.

11. The crossing point at Debeli Brijeg remains open on a 24-hour basis, allowing the movement of increasing civilian and commercial traffic between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Montenegro).

United Nations-controlled zone

12. The long-standing violations of the security regime in the United Nations-controlled zone remain unchanged. Approximately 25 Croatian Special Police are located at four positions and approximately 10 Yugoslav (Montenegrin) Border Police are present at two positions inside that zone. The Croatian Special Police conduct patrols throughout the part of the zone accessible to them.

13. Both Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Montenegro) maintain manned positions for the purpose of operating the Cape Kobila crossing point. These checkpoints, which are staffed on a 24-hour basis, permit the passage of civilians between Croatia and Montenegro during specified hours (currently four hours per day). UNMOP observers continue to report that the number of persons passing through the Cape Kobila checkpoints remains negligible in comparison with the number of those using the crossing point at Debeli Brijeg. Although these activities are violations of the security regime in the zone, they do not constitute a security threat.

14. The Croatian authorities continue to permit civilians, including local and foreign tourists, to enter the zone for fishing, agricultural and recreational purposes. On one occasion during the period under review, a group of motorcyclists, escorted by Croatian police, was observed in the United Nations-controlled zone. A public telephone installed in January 2000 by Croatian Telecommunications personnel at the Croatian checkpoint at Cape Kobila remains in place, notwithstanding UNMOP's requests that it be removed. The waters of the United Nations-controlled zone continue to be violated frequently by Croatian and Yugoslav fishing boats. On one occasion, a Montenegrin police boat violated the waters of the United Nations-controlled zone.

15. The activities described above, which involve the unauthorized presence of civilians and officials in the United Nations-controlled zone, constitute violations of the agreed security regime. While they do not constitute a security threat, they nevertheless demonstrate that the parties do not feel obliged to ensure full respect for some of the provisions of the security regime freely agreed upon by them.

III. Progress towards a negotiated settlement

16. As members of the Security Council will recall, both the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Croatia have undertaken, in their Agreement on Normalization of Relations signed at Belgrade on 23 August 1996 (S/1996/706, annex), to resolve their dispute over Prevlaka through bilateral negotiations. As reported previously, each Government has submitted a proposal for settling the dispute (see S/1998/533 and S/1998/632) and their negotiating teams have held four rounds of talks, the last one at Belgrade on 9 March 1999.

17. In April 2000, the Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations informed me that the authorities of his country had extended an invitation to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to attend a fifth round of negotiations in Croatia at a date to be determined. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has replied to that invitation by a letter dated 8 June 2000 (see S/2000/602).

18. As previously reported (see S/2000/305, para. 14) Croatia conveyed its position on the dispute in a letter addressed to me on 5 April 2000 (S/2000/289). The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, for its part, responded by a letter to the President of the Security Council dated 16 June 2000 (S/2000/602). These letters continue to reflect divergent views on the nature of the dispute and the way ahead.

IV. Confidence-building measures

19. As will be recalled, in October 1999, a "package" of recommendations and options for confidence-building was conveyed to the parties by the Secretariat (see S/1999/1051, para. 20). The package covered basic elements of the dispute, confidence-building measures and freedom of movement for local civilians. Consultations with the parties on the options presented for their consideration have continued during the reporting period. The parties, however, continue to take a selective approach on the options proposed, reflecting their overall divergent views on the dispute.

V. Financial aspects

20. Although an independent mission, for administrative and budgetary purposes UNMOP is treated as part of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH). By its resolution 54/273 of 15 June 2000, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of $158.7 million gross for the maintenance of UNMIBH for the 12-month period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001.

21. Therefore, should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNMOP beyond 15 July 2000, as recommended in paragraph 25 below, the costs of maintaining the Mission would be met from within the budget of UNMIBH.

VI. Observations

22. The efforts of UNMOP to convince the parties to devise means of implementing the confidence-building measures proposed by the Secretariat have not been entirely successful and the positions of the parties on the options package as a whole continue to reflect their differing interpretations of the Prevlaka dispute.

23. Against this background, Croatia's invitation to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to attend a fifth round of negotiations, together with the Yugoslav side's acceptance, constitute positive developments. It is hoped, therefore, that the parties will find a common ground for restarting their talks on the resolution of the dispute, their continued divergent positions in that dispute notwithstanding. However, because of the still unsettled general political circumstances in the area, expectations for substantive progress in the near future towards a negotiated solution appear to remain limited.

24. As observed previously (see S/2000/305, para. 19), although the opening and continued operation of the checkpoints at Cape Kobila in the United Nations-controlled zone, as opposed to the operation of the crossing point at Debeli Brijeg in the demilitarized zone, does not of itself constitute a security threat, it is a violation of the United Nations-mandated security regime. As mentioned in my previous report (ibid.), UNMOP stands ready to assist in the development of arrangements to give effect to any agreement on this issue which the parties might reach.

25. Given the importance of ensuring that the situation on the ground continues to be as free of tension as possible, and in order to maintain the conditions of stability which are essential to any meaningful progress towards a political settlement, I recommend that the mandate of UNMOP be extended for a further six months, until 15 January 2001, without change to the current concept of operations. The Security Council may wish to request the parties to continue to report regularly on progress in their talks.

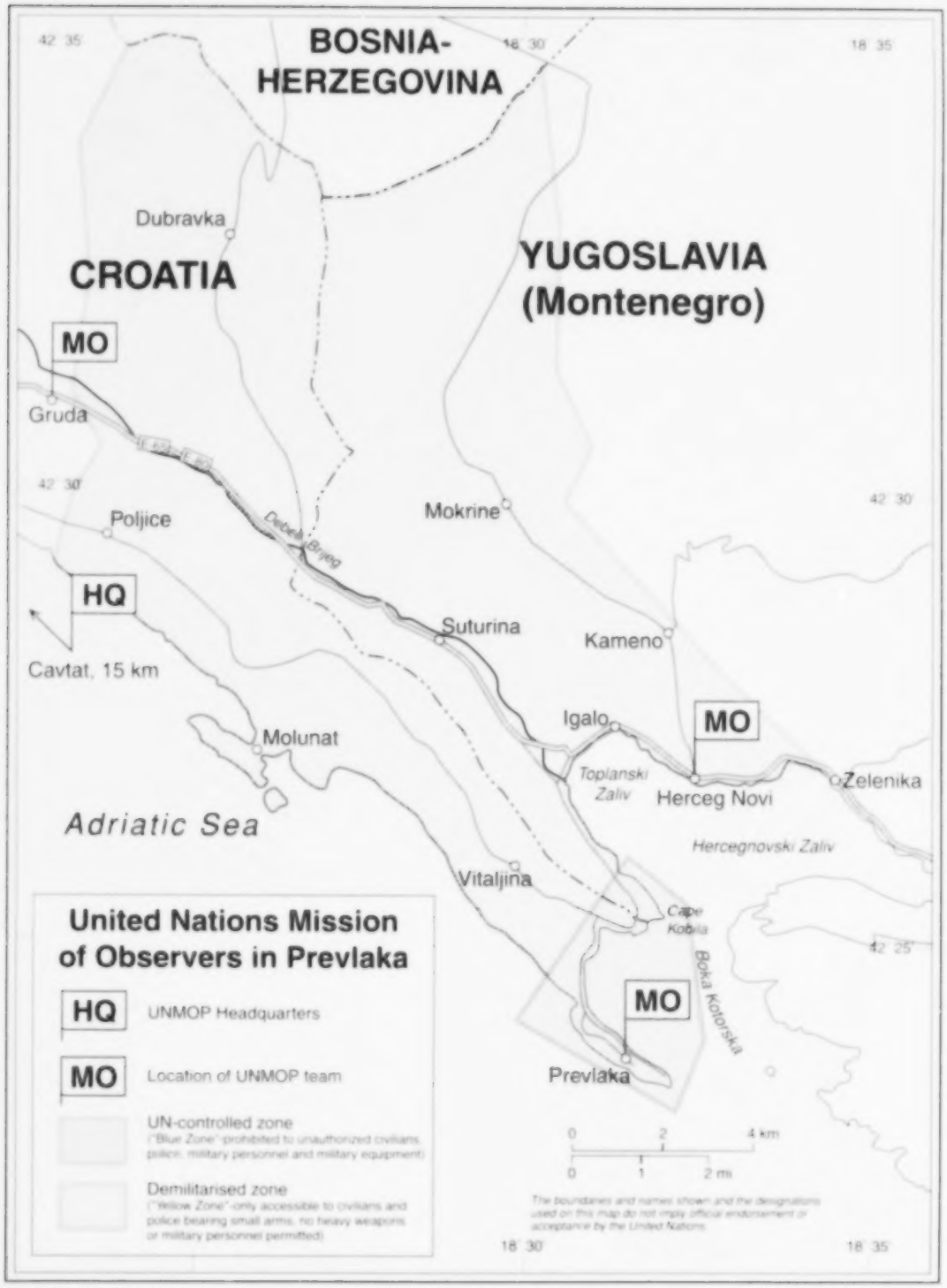
26. In order for UNMOP to fully implement its mandate in its area of responsibility, it is essential that the United Nations military observers be permitted to patrol at all times all areas of the demilitarized zone without preconditions or restrictions on their freedom of movement.

27. In conclusion, I should like to commend the Chief Military Observer and the men and women of UNMOP for their continuing efforts to maintain peace and security in their area of responsibility.

Annex

Composition and strength of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka as at 1 July 2000

Country	*Number of military observers*
Argentina	1
Bangladesh	1
Belgium	1
Brazil	1
Canada	1
Czech Republic	1
Denmark	1
Egypt	1
Finland	1
Ghana	1
Indonesia	2
Ireland	1
Jordan	1
Kenya	1
Nepal	1
New Zealand	2
Nigeria	3
Norway	1
Pakistan	1
Poland	1
Portugal	1
Russian Federation	1
Sweden	1
Switzerland	1
Ukraine	1
Total	**27**



Map 4137 Rev.2 United Nations
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